Microdata and TableBuilder: Labour Force Status of Families

Enables detailed analysis of how families engage with the labour market

On this page

Labour Force Status of Families microdata in DataLab

Labour Force Status of Families (/statistics/labour/employment-and-unemployment/labour-force-status-families/latest-release) microdata for June 2024 is now available in ABS DataLab, released as a supplementary file for the Longitudinal Labour Force (/statistics/microdata-tablebuilder/available-microdata-tablebuilder/longitudinal-labour-force-australia) (LLFS) microdata. All existing users of the LLFS microdata will automatically get access to the Labour Force Status of Families file and new users can apply for access to both files.

Labour Force Status of Families in Tablebuilder

The June 2024 Labour Force Status of Families Tablebuilder file will be released in early 2025. This release will also include data for June 2022 and June 2023.

Feedback

Introduction

This product provides a range of information about the release of microdata relating to the characteristics of families and how they engage with the labour market.

Microdata are the most detailed information available from a survey and are generally the responses to individual questions on the questionnaire or data derived from two or more questions.

Labour Force Status of Families, 2005 to 2024

Labour Force Status of Families is produced from data collected in the Labour Force Survey (LFS), and is designed to provide statistics on family characteristics and the labour force characteristics of family members in the following broad categories:

- Geography (state of usual residence)
- Family type and characteristics (couple families, one parent families)
- Demographics of husband, partner, lone parent or family head

- Demographics of wife or partner

- Labour Force Status of partner, lone parent or family head

- Labour Force Status of family members (number of family members employed, etc)

- Employment characteristics of husband, partner, lone parent or family head

- Employment characteristics of wife or partner

- Unemployment characteristics of husband, partner, lone parent or family head

- Unemployment characteristics of wife or partner

- Age of dependants

- Number of dependants

- Educational attendance of dependants

Families data is released in both TableBuilder and microdata in the ABS DataLab.

TableBuilder is an online tool for creating tables and graphs from underlying microdata. Refer to TableBuilder (/statistics/microdata-tablebuilder/tablebuilder) for more information.

DataLab is the analysis solution for high-end users who want to undertake real time complex analysis of detailed microdata in a secure environment. Refer to DataLab (/statistics/microdata-tablebuilder/datalab) for more information.

Accessing the data

You can use this data in:

- TableBuilder - online tool for creating tables and graphs.

- DataLab - analyse detailed microdata

Compare data services (/about/data-services/compare-data-services) to see what's right for you. Information on how to apply for access can be found in TableBuilder (/statistics/microdata-tablebuilder/tablebuilder#how-to-access) and DataLab (/statistics/microdata-tablebuilder/datalab#applying-for-datalab-access) .

Further information about these products, and other information to assist users in understanding and accessing microdata in general, is available from the Microdata and TableBuilder Entry Page (/statistics/microdata-tablebuilder) . For further support in the use of this product, please contact Microdata Access Strategies (/about/contact-us) via microdata.access@abs.gov.au (mailto:microdata.access@abs.gov.au?Subject=Enquiry%20about%20ABS%20microdata%20and%20TableBuilder%20products&Body=Hi%20ABS%0D%0A%0D%0AI%20would%20like%20to%20enquire%20about%20ABS%20microdata%20and/or%20TableBuilder%20products.%0D%0A%0D%0AName:%20%0D%0AUser%20ID%20(this%20is%20a%20number):%20%0D%0AOrganisation:%20%0D%0APhone%20number:%20%0D%0A%0D%0AFind%20a%20topic:%0D%0Ahttps://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/microdata-tablebuilder/available-microdata-tablebuilder%0D%0A%0D%0ATableBuilder%20and%20microdata%20costs:%20%0D%0Ahttps://www.abs.gov.au/about/data-services/data-services-prices%0D%0A%0D%0AProducts%20I%20am%20interested%20in:%0D%0A%0D%0ATableBuilder%20data%20series:%0D%0A1.%20%0D%0A2.%20%0D%0A3.%20%0D%0A%0D%0AMicrodataDownload%0D%0A(all%20basic%20microdata)%0D%0A%0D%0ADataLab%20(detailed%20microdata):%0D%0A1.%20%0D%0A2.%20%0D%0A3.%20%0D%0A%0D%0A) .

Data available on request

Data collected in the survey but not included in TableBuilder may be available from the ABS, on request, as statistics in tabulated form.

Subject to confidentiality and sampling variability constraints, special tabulations can be produced incorporating

data items, populations and geographic areas selected to meet individual requirements. These are available, on request, on a fee for service basis. For more information, contact the ABS by visiting www.abs.gov.au/about/contact-us (https://www.abs.gov.au/about/contact-us) or email the the Labour Statistics Branch at labour.statistics@abs.gov.au (mailto:labour.statistics@abs.gov.au) .

Privacy

The ABS Privacy Policy (https://www.abs.gov.au/about/legislation-and-policy/privacy/privacy-abs) outlines how the ABS handles any personal information that you provide to us.
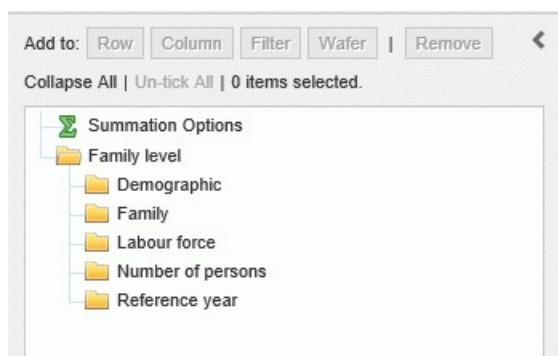
Data and file structure

Survey methodology

General information about the Labour Force Status of Families, including summary results, are available in Labour Force Status of Families (https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/labour/employment-and-unemployment/labour-force-status-families/latest-release) .

Detailed information about the survey including scope and coverage, survey design, data collection methodology, weighting, estimation and benchmarking, estimate reliability and a glossary can be accessed from the Methodology (/methodologies/labour-force-status-families-methodology/jun-2024) page of the publication.

Data items

The data items included in the Labour Force Status of Families TableBuilder are grouped under broad headings and subheadings as shown in the image below.

Data item lists

[↓ Download all (273.84 KB)]

DataLab: Labour Force Status of Families, Data item list, 2005 to 2024
↓ **Download** XLSX
[253.15 KB]

TableBuilder: Labour Force Status of Families, Data item list, 2009 to 2021
↓ **Download** XLSX
[85.45 KB]

File structure

The underlying format of the Labour Force Status of Families TableBuilder file is structured at the family level. This family level contains general demographic characteristics of couples and parents such as age and country of birth as well details about family type, number and age of children in the family and employment information for couples and parents.

When tabulating data from TableBuilder, family level weights are automatically applied to the underlying sample counts to provide estimates for the total number of families.
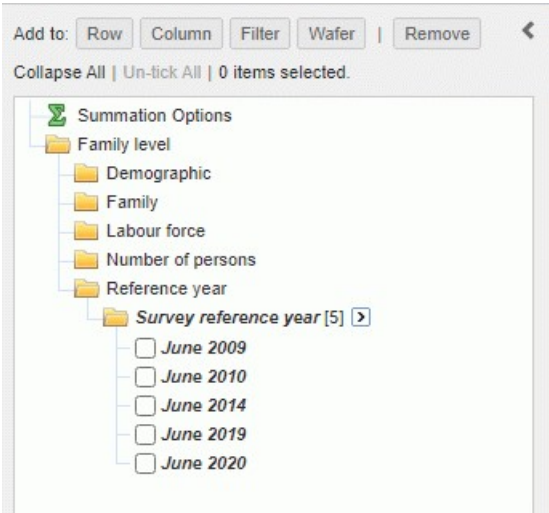
Reference year

The Labour Force Status of Families TableBuilder contains a mandatory field called Reference year to allow for historical analysis. By default this field will be present in any new table as per the image below:

Individual years can be removed from the table using the data item panel by selecting the required year and removing it from the table as per the image below:

However, at least one category (reference period) of the mandatory field must be present in a table for TableBuilder to retrieve data.

Not applicable categories

Most data items included in the TableBuilder file include a 'Not applicable' category. This category generally represents the number of people who were not asked a particular question or the number of people excluded from the population for a data item when that data were derived (e.g. Hours usually worked is not applicable to people who weren't employed; likewise Age of wife or partner does not apply to one-parent families where there is no wife or partner).

Zero value cells

Tables generated from sample surveys will sometimes contain cells with zero values because no respondents that satisfied the parameters of a particular cell in a table were in the survey. This is despite there being people in the general population with those characteristics. This is an example of sampling variability which occurs with all sample surveys. Relative Standard Errors cannot be generated for zero cells.

Using TableBuilder

For general information relating to the TableBuilder or instructions on how to use features of the TableBuilder product, please refer to [TableBuilder (/statistics/microdata-tablebuilder/tablebuilder)](/statistics/microdata-tablebuilder/tablebuilder) .

More specific information applicable to the Labour Force Status of Families TableBuilder, which should enable users to understand, interpret and tabulate the data, is outlined below.

Confidentiality features in TableBuilder

In accordance with the Census and Statistics Act 1905, all the data in TableBuilder are subjected to a confidentiality process before release. This confidentiality process is undertaken to avoid releasing information that may allow the identification of individuals, families, households, dwellings or businesses.

Processes used in TableBuilder to confidentialise records include the following:

- perturbation of data; and
- table suppression

Perturbation effects

To minimise the risk of identifying families in aggregate statistics, a technique is used to randomly adjust cell values. This technique is called perturbation. Perturbation involves small random adjustments of the statistics and is considered the most satisfactory technique for avoiding the release of identifiable statistics while maximising the range of information that can be released. These adjustments have a negligible impact on the underlying pattern of the statistics.

The introduction of these random adjustments result in tables not adding up. As a result, randomly adjusted individual cells will be consistent across tables, but the totals in any table will not be the sum of the individual cell values. The size of the difference between summed cells and the relevant total will generally be very small.

Please be aware that the effects of perturbing the data may result in components being larger than their totals. This includes determining proportions.

Table suppression

Some tables generated within TableBuilder may contain a substantial proportion of very low counts within cells (excluding cells that have counts of zero). When this occurs, all values within the table are suppressed to preserve confidentiality. The following error message below is displayed (in red) at the bottom of the table when table suppression has occurred.

ERROR: The table has been suppressed as it is too sparse
ERROR: table cell values have been suppressed

Counting units and weights

Weighting is the process of adjusting results from a sample survey to infer results for the total population. To do this, a 'weight' is allocated to each record. The weight is the value that indicates how many family units are represented by each sample unit.

For the Labour Force Status of Families, only one weight option 'family level' is available in the summation options and will be applied by default.

When creating a table, the Reference year is a mandatory item to provide data for the relevant time period. The default setting is all available periods (2009-2021) and this can be changed by users.

Selecting data items for cross-tabulation

The Labour Force Status of Families TableBuilder product contains a range of data items detailing the characteristics

of families, including demographic characteristics of parents, family type, employment characteristics of parents and number of children and dependants by age.

Cross-tabulating data from various items will produce data about families. For example, cross-tabulating `State or territory of usual residence' by the 'Hours worked by husband or partner' produces a table showing the number of families usually resident in each state and territory by the hours worked by the husband or eldest partner in couple families, the lone parent in one parent families, and the family head in other families.

For more information on definitions and concepts that apply to the data items, please refer to Labour Force Status of Families (/statistics/labour/employment-and-unemployment/labour-force-status-families/latest-release) and Labour Force (/statistics/labour/employment-and-unemployment/labour-force-australia/latest-release) .

Using DataLab

DataLab allows real time access to detailed microdata files through a portal to a secure ABS environment. Using detailed microdata in DataLab allows users to run advanced statistical analyses using recent analytical software.

For information about the data items available on the detailed microdata files, see the Data Item Lists in Data downloads (/statistics/microdata-tablebuilder/available-microdata-tablebuilder/labour-force-status-families#data-downloads) .

About DataLab

Detailed microdata files in DataLab can be accessed on-site at ABS offices or in a secure virtual environment from your own computer. All unit record data remains in DataLab, and any analysis results or tables are checked by the ABS before being provided to users.

Refer to DataLab (https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/microdata-tablebuilder/datalab) for more information, including prerequisites for DataLab access.

Labour Force Status of Families microdata in DataLab, 2005-2024

Labour Force Status of Families microdata is now available in ABS DataLab, released as a supplementary file for the Longitudinal Labour Force (LLFS) microdata. All existing users of the LLFS microdata will automatically get access to the Labour Force Status of Families file and new users can apply for access to both files.

This release of Families microdata features data compiled annually for the months June 2005 to June 2024, as well as data compiled quarterly in the months March, September and December from March 2019 to June 2022.

Record identifiers

The record identifiers used in the Families and LLFS microdata are consistent across both files. This is to facilitate data linkage between the two files and enable further analysis. The Families microdata is presented at the household and family level and can be linked to the LLFS using Household ID (ABSHID) and Family number (FAMNUM).

Not all person level records in the LLFS can be linked to the Families microdata, including people living alone, people living with non-relatives in groups household, or people residing in non-private dwellings. Similarly, some family level records in the Families microdata cannot be linked to the LLFS because they are out of scope for the Labour Force Survey (e.g. families with members in the Australian Defence Force).

More details on these records and the formatting of record identifiers can be found in the Data Item List.

Weights

Family level weights (and replicate weights for calculating standard errors) are provided on the Labour Force Status

of Families file. These differ from the weights provided on the LLFS file, as they are benchmarked to provide estimates of the number of families, rather than the number of people.

Family weights are recommended for cross-sectional analysis of Families data items. When linking Families data items to LLFS data for longitudinal analysis, new person level weights should be calculated based on the population benchmarks provided on the LLFS file. Care should be taken to account for attrition bias by adjusting the weights appropriately (increasing the weights for those more likely to leave the LFS). More information on using benchmarks and weights for longitudinal analysis is provided in Longitudinal Labour Force (/statistics/microdata-tablebuilder/available-microdata-tablebuilder/longitudinal-labour-force-australia#using-datalab) .

History of changes

22/10/2024

- Release of Labour Force Status of Families microdata in DataLab for June 2024.
  - Addition of the latest data for June 2024
  - Revised data from June 2017 to June 2023 due to rebenchmarking to the latest Estimated Resident Population (ERP) data, as at June 2024
- TableBuilder release of June 2022, June 2023 and June 2024 Families data will be released at a later date.

Show all

24/10/2023

- Release of Labour Force Status of Families microdata in DataLab for June 2023.
  - Addition of the latest data for June 2023
  - Revised data from June 2017 to June 2022 due to rebenchmarking to the latest person and household level estimates resulting from the 2021 Census of Population and Housing.
  - The temporary introduction of data on a quarterly frequency between Mar 2019 and June 2022 due to the COVID-19 pandemic was not continued through to June 2023.
- TableBuilder release of June 2022 and June 2023 Families data is delayed until next year due to ongoing delays while the ABS upgrades the infrastructure behind TableBuilder to support the load from the 2021 Census.

18/10/2022

- Release of Labour Force Status of Families microdata in DataLab for the first time as a supplementary file for the Longitudinal Labour Force (LLFS) microdata. This file features data complied annually for the months June 2005 to June 2022, as well as quarterly data for the months March, September and December between March 2019 and June 2022.
- TableBuilder release of June 2022 Families data is delayed until later in the year in order to accommodate the release of 2021 Census data in TableBuilder.

12/10/2021

TableBuilder updates for June 2021 release

- Addition of the latest data from June 2021
- Addition of June data for 2011 to 2013 and 2015 to 2018, which were previously unavailable
- Addition of quarterly data from March 2019 to June 2021 (March, June, September and December)
- Addition of new data item "Age of youngest dependant - OECD age groups" to aid in international comparisons

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Previous catalogue number

This release previously used catalogue number 6224.0.00.001.